

These are the education platform proposals the Republican party would like us to forget. The Democrats will continue to fight for our children in public schools.

#### WE ARE SAVING MILLIONS OF CHILDREN FROM POVERTY

(Mr. GUTKNECHT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, one of the central planks of our Contract with America was real welfare reform that required work and personal responsibility. Three times we passed our plan that gave States wide latitude to reform their systems. Twice the President vetoed. Our friends on the left warned of dire consequences. Donna Shalala was, quote, visibly shaken when the President finally signed the bill. Since then welfare rolls have been cut by nearly 40 percent. Over 2 million families have moved off of welfare rolls and onto payrolls. Dependency and despair have been replaced with hope and opportunity. Billions of dollars are being saved, but, more important, we are saving millions of children from one more generation of poverty.

Mr. Speaker, what a difference a Republican Congress has made.

#### IS THIS WHAT WE WANT FOR OUR KIDS?

(Mr. MENENDEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, as we meet here today, hundreds of thousands of American children are beginning their school days in overcrowded classrooms with poor lighting, ceilings that are literally crumbling apart, lead plumbing systems and barely enough money for textbooks and basic supplies, and what we, as Democrats, want to do is to make sure those local school districts have the opportunity with federal assistance to leverage and to have their own decision-making to make a difference in those classrooms with 100,000 school teachers which they will put in classrooms. We want to make sure that in fact we end up hiring 100,000 school teachers and not spending money on things that will not reduce class size or will not improve the leaking roof over their head. Mr. Speaker, if it were up to Republicans, they just simply would not support these initiatives.

Is that what we want for our kids?

Republicans say stop throwing money at the problem. For God's sake, Mr. Speaker, it takes money to repair a roof, it takes money to buy a modern heating system, it takes money to hire new teachers, and schools like these can be found in urban, suburban and rural areas alike.

Every child deserves a good school and a good education, and that is why

we are still here fighting on a budget to make sure that happens.

#### DO NOT LEAVE EDUCATION UP TO THE WASHINGTON BUREAUCRATS

(Mr. HAYWORTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, regardless of the rhetoric that is bandied about on this floor, it would be nice if everyone here learned a simple lesson when they came to the well of the House. The lesson may not be taught that often in school; it should be taught at home to tell the truth.

Now, Mr. Speaker, since the debate centers around numbers, here are some important numbers our colleagues should remember:

Number of days since the last U.S.-U.N. inspection for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq: 71.

Number of days since the last fundraiser featuring the President: 2.

Number of meaningful educational initiatives passed by this common sense conservative Congress, vetoed by the President of the United States: 7.

Number of Cabinet meetings held in the White House by the President of the United States this year: 2, focusing on his personal problems.

Mr. Speaker, we need not fall for the lure of focus groups. We need to join sincerely to solve problems and not leave education up to the Washington bureaucrats.

Remember these numbers as the days continue.

#### SCHOOLS NEED FEDERAL ASSISTANCE, NOT FEDERAL CONTROL

(Mr. STRICKLAND asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, I have here in my hand a cloth filled with coal dust sent to me by a principal from a southern Ohio school saying:

Congressman, this is what our teachers must use to wipe the coal dust from our desks and the computers before our students can use them.

Ohio, Ohio ranks 50 among the States in terms of the physical condition of our school buildings, and yet in Ohio we use public tax dollars to build sports stadiums. The average school in my district is 46 years old. Students in my district go to schools that are unsafe. Ten percent do not meet local fire codes.

We need federal assistance, not federal control, but federal assistance to enable our local schools to build, repair and modernize the schools our children attend.

In Ohio prisoners could not be housed in some of our school buildings because the courts would say they were unfit for prisoners, and yet we send our students there.

□ 1030

#### NEA FUNDING FOR OBSCENE PLAY 'CORPUS CHRISTI'

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I was deeply disturbed this morning listening to NPR, National Public Radio, regarding a play called Corpus Christi, written by Terence McNally, playing at the Manhattan Theater Club in New York City. This play is a blasphemous, pseudo-creation by homosexuals about the life of Christ.

Now, the first thought I had was, how much money did the NEA provide?

Sure enough, in a letter on June 11, 1998, the chairman of the NEA admitted, "The theater did apply to the NEA for funding to support development of Corpus Christi." It goes on to say, "After consideration, the NEA approved an award of \$31,000 to support the development of this play based upon the information provided in the application."

The NEA now claims the money was eventually used for other purposes, but this entire situation further shows that the NEA still does not get it and uses taxpayers' money to fund questionable projects that are antithetical to our values.

I call on Bill Ivey, Chairman of the NEA, to cut off all funding, all funding, to the Manhattan Theater Club today.

#### WORK IN A BIPARTISAN FASHION ON IMPROVING EDUCATION

(Ms. LOFGREN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, we all know that we do our best work in government when we work in a bipartisan matter and we work in partnership with each other, and that is why it is so important when we look at funding for 100,000 teachers that we do it the smart way, that we do it in partnership, making sure that the funding gets into the classroom.

I was in local government for 14 years and our school board for two years before that, and I saw a lot of money wasted under programs that were just block grants. Instead, what works best is when we set parameters, we hold hands and we work together for the well-being of our country, and nothing is more important than having enough teachers to make sure that our children get the best education available and are the best educated children in the world. Our economic future depends on it, and really the peace and hope for society depends on it.

I would urge all of us to work with our President to make sure that the funding for teachers gets to the classroom and not into the administration, as is currently being recommended and requested by the majority party.